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**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

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**The Sales Turnover Tax**

THE proposition to substitute what is known as a "sales turnover tax" for the present excess profits tax is being energetically pushed by means of widespread and insidious propaganda. Back of this propaganda, on their own admission, is a Wall Street group led by Otto H. Kahn, Jules Semon Bache, and Meyer Rothschild.

Summed up in a sentence, the scheme is one to shift the burden of from \$800,000,000 to a billion dollars of taxes now paid by those best able to pay it to the shoulders of those least able to pay it.

What is worse, the form of the tax is such that by the time it came to the ultimate consumer it would be very likely to have been "loaded" as well as "pyramided" to such an extent that it would be increased anywhere from 25 to 50 per cent at each turnover. That is, in order to get one billion dollars into the national treasury, the already overburdened consumer would be bled to the extent of four or five billion dollars yearly, or approximately \$40 for every man, woman and child in the United States—\$200 for the average family of five.

In the hearings before the House Committee on Industrial Taxation, the iniquity of this proposed measure was made plain by the testimony of scores of competent tax experts and adversely reported on by Mr. Houston, then Secretary of the Treasury. After thoroughly and impartially pursued investigations, it was rejected as unjust and impractical by the National Industrial Conference Board, representing the greatest industrial organization in the country, through a committee of qualified experts. It was also unqualifiedly and unanimously condemned by the United States Chamber of Commerce through its committee of nine authorities of national reputation. In fact, the Kahn-Bache group of "financiers" are its only sponsors.

Congressman James A. Frear, of Wisconsin, is ably and fearlessly fighting the attempt of these bankers and brokers to relieve profiteers, who are able to put their millions into tax-exempt bonds, from their just share of the tax burden and to place it upon the country's productive workers. In a speech which should have the widest possible circulation, he mercilessly analyzes the measure and exposes the true inwardness of the motives of its chief backers. He should have the hearty support in this fight of every man who does not wish to see imposed in this country an utterly undemocratic sales tax on the necessities of life, which, in the words of one of the greatest international authorities on taxation, "would evoke a political struggle the like of which we have never seen in this country, representing as it would an attempt to put an undue burden upon the consumer, instead of on the possessor of wealth."

There is a better way—a way which we must come to eventually, much as the tax dodgers and shifters may dislike it.

**The Message**

BEYOND the confirmation of a general expectation that the policy of the new administration would include the scrapping of the League of Nations and an immediate ending of the anomalous continuance of a technical state of war between the United States and the Central Powers by the obvious method of the Knox resolution, President Harding's first message to Congress confines itself largely to accepted generalities.

The message starts out promisingly with an accurate and impressive reminder that there is "no more pressing problem at home than to restrict our national expenditures within the limits of our national income, and at the same time measurably lift the burdens of war taxation from the shoulders of the American people."

Announcing that "the staggering load of war debt must be cared for," and that "we shall hasten the solution and aid effectively in lifting the tax burdens if we strike resolutely at expenditure," the President goes on to declare that the burden imposed by current expenditures of raising five billion dollars a year is "unbearable." There are two agencies, he tells Congress, to be employed in correction of this evil: "rigid resistance in appropriation and the utmost economy in administration."

This, surely, reads as if it were meant to lead up to a definite pointing out of the duty of Congress in the matter of reducing the military and naval expenditures that consume some 90 per cent of the five billion dollar Federal revenue which the people are so sadly burdened to provide. But the President does not indicate the fact that there is one way in which such a lightening of "unbearable" burdens is possible: that is, by radical revision or suspension of the naval building program. As has been frequently pointed out, disarmament means, at the start, simply reduction or restriction of additions to the present naval forces. And the naval powers of the world are waiting for the United States to take the initiative in calling a conference for the arrangement of such reduction or restriction.

After directing the early attention to the Army and Navy appropriations as "unfinished business inherited from the preceding Congress," and declaring the government to be "in accord with the wish to eliminate the burdens of heavy armament," the President says:

"We are ready to co-operate with other nations to approximate disarmament, but merest prudence forbids that we disarm alone. The naval program, which had its beginning in what seemed the highest assurances of peace, can carry no threat after the latest proof of our national unselfishness."

This expression is friendly to progress, but is only passively assistant. It may be a tentative intimation of further overtures to be made by us, or it may be a notice to the nations that if they wish to restrict disarmament it is up to them to take the initiative and tell us so. The President's tone is inviting but not leading, and it has this superior moral advantage that when he announces the integrity of American intentions, the world must incline to believe it. That we cannot disarm alone is true; it is just as true that no other nation can; but will we all disarm together? If so, how are we to find it out unless some one in authority puts the direct question?

**The Peace of Riga**

"THEY made a wilderness and called it peace" was the classic comment on an official proclamation about a century ago that "Peace reigns at Warsaw," following the last partition of Poland. Is history likely to repeat itself in connection with the peace treaty signed at Riga between Poland and the Russian Soviet Republic? At the very moment of the signing of the treaty, according to press reports, from eighteen to twenty Bolshevik divisions with artillery and an aviation corps were advancing against Poland in the districts of Smolensk, Vitebsk, Orsha, Mohilev and to the north of these points.

It will be remembered that, as one of the conditions of entering into a trade agreement with the Soviets, Britain originally demanded guaranties of a cessation of hostilities with Poland. This the Bolsheviks rejected, insisting on their readiness to make a fair and square peace with Poland directly and countering with an expression of a readiness to participate in an international conference of the Great Powers and the nations of Eastern Europe! In the negotiations at Reval, resulting in the treaty now signed at Riga, a serious hitch was caused by the Bolshevik attempt to dictate to Poland the administration in detail of her own internal affairs, such as racial status and privileges and the pensioning of her own soldiers. Although, under the treaty, the Bolsheviks agree to respect Polish independence and the integrity of her frontiers as fixed in the Treaty of Versailles, binding the Poles to respect the boundaries claimed for Bolshevik Russia, numerous loopholes were left for the continuance of Bolshevik machinations in the neighboring states of Lithuania, Lettonia and Ukraina. Such machinations may make it easy to frame pretexts for charges that, in this, that or the other particular, Poland has violated the treaty and rendered it null and void.

The whole situation has been vastly complicated by the Wilsonian policy of refusing to recognize the various small nations created by secession from the Greater Russia, insisting that, with the exception of the elision of Poland and Finland, Russia's old frontiers shall remain intact, yet insisting also on the rights to self-determination of the small peoples that had formed part of the Russian Empire.

**Mr. Lansing's Explanations**

OSTENSIBLY written to explain the reasons for the breach between President Wilson and himself that resulted in his resignation, Mr. Lansing's book also explains many other things of transcendent public interest. It therefore has historic value beyond its exposition and defense of the personal opinions of the former Secretary of State as opposed to those of his chief. This opposition of views, by the way, enters wholly on the peace negotiations. It may even be said to condense itself into a difference concerning Article X of the League Covenant. Mexico is not even mentioned.

In the light of what has occurred since the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, it is easy to see that in a literal sense, Mr. Lansing was entirely right in opposing the article guaranteeing the political independence and territorial integrity of member-nations in the League; a guaranty inevitably implying resort to force. Even ardent admirers of Mr. Wilson and advocates of the League in the last electoral campaign must have become persuaded by the logic of such recent events as the Allied occupation of the Rhineland and the British, French and Japanese imperialism revealed in the mandates, that this incorporation of a virtual transfer of the authority of the American Congress to declare war, or to control the use of American military and naval forces, constituted the fatal flaw in the League plan. However illustriously right Mr. Wilson may have been in the passionate idealism of his battle for the League, he was here practically wrong.

On the personal side, Mr. Lansing makes it plain throughout his book that there was from the first so pronounced a temperamental incompatibility between himself and Mr. Wilson that one wonders why his resignation was so long deferred. Of a severely legalistic and official turn of mind, the Secretary of State knew the impossibility of writing international contracts in misty language that might have its value for oratory but lacked strength to serve as the foundation of international understandings.

There is some reminder of the French proverb to the effect that "he who excuses accuses himself" in Mr. Lansing's assumption of a suspicion in the President's mind that the former helped in the Senate's defeat of ratification. As to the Shantung clause, the ex-Secretary of State gives us no light on President Wilson's repeated assertions that Japan had solemnly promised to return Shantung to China.

Probably the most important revelations in Mr. Lansing's book are those picturing the very remarkable part played in the peace negotiations by Colonel Edward M. House, who, it is more than suggested, really influenced Mr. Wilson against his own better judgment and who is indicated to have been the real author of the fourteenth of the famous Fourteen Points and of Article X of the League Covenant, which follows its language.

**Makers of Music**

IT HAS been asserted that the first mention of music is at the creation of the world when, according to the Bible, the morning stars sang together for joy. From that day down to the present, those who have made music have been honored and beloved.

When a few weeks ago, Caruso lay upon his bed facing death, people all over the world watched for the bulletins which were issued by his physicians, and prayed that the singer might recover and once again make music for the multitude.

And while we laud those who have given to the world their masterpieces of music, let us not forget those who, in another manner, have put music and song into the lives and hearts of others, whose names are unknown and for whom no monument ever will be raised.

There is the woman who is obliged to care for her parents through years of sickness and adversity, but through all the years is filled with song and at the same time strikes chords of happiness in the hearts of those near her.

There is the invalid, suffering and chained to her chair, who maintains a sweetness of character and serenity of spirit which fills each day with brightness and song.

And there is the man from whom fate has snatched all that is dear and seemingly worth living for, who still "carries on" with a smile, and gives to others the music which he himself has been denied.

These are the real musicians who make the walks of life easier because of their music. They are the persons who, when the winds of adversity blow, amid the tumult keep a clear head and a brave heart.